

**IV. AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for forming a thin film, wherein a film-forming gas is supplied from a gas supplying device to a vacuum container which can be evacuated by an exhausting device to reduce gas pressure in the container, an electric power is applied from a power applying device to the film-forming gas to produce plasma from the gas in which a thin film is formed on an article to be film-covered disposed on a supporting member in the vacuum container, the gas supplying device including a gas supply member having a gas supply surface portion, the gas supply surface portion being opposed to a film-forming surface of the article to be film-covered disposed on the supporting member in the vacuum container, the power applying device including a power applying electrode connected to a power source for forming the plasma and disposed in the vacuum container, the gas supply member being disposed in the vacuum container without connection to the power source and having a plurality of gas supply holes dispersedly formed at the gas supply surface portion, the supporting member being grounded, the power applying electrode being disposed in a surrounding region around a space between the article to be film-covered disposed on the supporting member in the vacuum container and the gas supply surface portion of the gas supply member opposed to the article,

~~wherein the plurality of gas supply holes includes a first set of gas supply holes arranged in a matrix of columns and rows and a second set of gas supply holes arranged in a pattern superimposed on the matrix, the first and second set of gas supply holes being in fluidic independence of each other~~

wherein the exhausting device discharges a gas from a region in a vicinity of a periphery portion of the gas supply member and

wherein the power applying device includes four divided electrodes as the power applying electrode for applying the electric power and high frequency power sources each connected to the divided electrodes, respectively, each of the four divided electrodes is in a shape of a bent plate forming two electrode sections integrally connected substantially perpendicularly to each other, the

divided electrodes being disposed in a quadrilateral shape in a plan view  
surrounding the space between the article to be film-covered in the vacuum  
container and the gas supply surface portion of the gas supply member opposed  
to the article, each divided electrode disposed adjacent an inner surface of  
vacuum container such that at least the gas supply member, the article to be film-  
covered and the supporting member are disposed internally of the quadrilateral  
shape.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Canceled)

4. (Original) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein distribution density of the gas supply holes in the gas supply surface portion of the gas supply member and area of opening of the holes are determined in such a way that amount of gas blow from the gas supply surface portion is varied from a peripheral region to a central region of the gas supply surface portion.

5. - 15. (Canceled)

16. (New) An apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a driving device disposed at least partially within the vacuum container and connected to the supporting member, the driving device operative to move the supporting member either towards or away from the gas supply surface portion of the gas supply member.